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THE UNITED STATES, BRAZIL, AND THE SLAVE TRADE.

While, by our seaward advances, we of the Atlantic side have but very indistinct accounts of certain troubles in Brazil, it certainly looks a little singular to meet, coming back from beyond the mountains, a letter like that taken from the *Cleveland Plaindealer* of the 8th, which we copied in Saturday's paper, and which has, we believe, taken most of our readers by surprise, being their first information of our being involved in any difficulty in that quarter.

From the phraseology of that letter—"we took an American slave brig," "we kept her for a week," "the frigate," &c.—one is compelled to suppose the writer an actor in the events, and on board of our largest vessel there; but it is difficult to imagine how even a very young American sailor should make so gross a mistake as to suppose our Ambassador there invested with the right of declaring war, or should represent our squadron as yielding up a lawful capture to the fear of being sunk by the Brazilian forts. It is plain, however, that some serious misunderstanding has arisen, in consequence of the zeal with which our public agents have of late set on foot measures for arresting those gross and shameful abuses of our flag, as the cover for slave-trading in that quarter, which were brought to the attention of Congress in the late President's Message of the 20th February last.

That Message we gave at the time, but without the documents, which were not then accessible to us. Since the adjournment of Congress, the Message, with the accompanying documents, have appeared among the printed documents of the House of Representatives; and as these papers afford much important information in regard to the Brazilian slave-trade, and explain the probable grounds of any quarrel with Brazil which may have arisen, it is necessary that we should endeavor, by an analysis of the entire document, to put our readers in exact possession of a matter, in which are largely concerned not only the general honor of our country and its citizens, the enforcement of its duties and laws, and its humane and just abhorrence of a barbarous traffic, but possibly its peace, if Brazil has taken or given umbrage at the steps which our public agents have considered expedient on our part for suppressing the abuses of our flag, committed by disgraceful citizens of our own, in combination with Brazilian or Frenchmen or Englishmen equally wicked.

Our readers must, first of all, recall the general tenor of the Message in question, as far as already published. Its main statement is the following:

"The mode and manner of carrying on this trade are clearly and fearlessly set forth in the accompanying documents; and it would seem that a regular system has been adopted for the purpose of thwarting the policy and evading the penalties of our laws. American vessels, with the knowledge (as there are good reasons to believe) of the owners and masters, are chartered, or rather purchased, by notorious slave-dealers in Brazil, aided by English brokers and capitalists, with this intent. The vessel is only nominally chartered at so much per month; while, in truth, it is actually sold, to be delivered on the coast of Africa; the charter-party binding the owners, in the mean time, to take on board, as passengers, a new crew in Brazil, who, when delivered on the coast, are to navigate her back to the ports of Brazil with her cargo of slaves. Under this agreement, the vessel clears from the United States for some port in Great Britain, where a cargo of merchandise, known as 'coast goods,' and designed especially for the African trade, is purchased, shipped, and consigned, together with the vessel, either directly to the slave-dealer himself, or to his agents or accomplices in Brazil. On her arrival a new crew is put on board as passengers, and the vessel and cargo consigned to an equally guilty factor or agent on the coast of Africa, where the unlawful purpose, originally designed, is finally consummated. The merchandise is exchanged for slaves; the vessel is delivered up; her name obliterated; her papers destroyed; her American crew discharged, to be provided for by the charterers, and the new or passenger crew put in command, to carry back its miserable freight to the first contrivers of the voyage, or their employees in Brazil."

The Message then proceeds to extenuate, we think with little reason, the guilt of a certain part of the instruments of these iniquities:

"During the whole progress of this tortuous enterprise, it is possible that neither the American crew originally enlisted, nor the passenger crew put on board in the Brazilian ports, are aware of the nature of the voyage; and yet it is on these, principally, ignorant if not innocent, that the penalties of the law are inflicted; while the guilty contrivers—the charterers, brokers, owners, and masters—in short, all who are most deeply concerned in the crime and its rewards, for the most part escape unpunished."

We utterly object to such gratuitous apologies as this, by the highest agent of our laws, for the horrid violations of them in which the men thus excused as "ignorant if not innocent" must personally engage. The whole thing is in that demagogic spirit which takes obligingly of crimes, because common sailors, workmen, the larger class, take part in them. The President forgot that the contrivers of such voyages would be most unlikely to employ men without knowing, until they arrived on the slave-coast, whether or not they were willing to be the instruments of such crimes. Such a risk they could not run; for what if the crew shipped refused to act on getting there? Or (still worse) what if some of them gave information? But, at all events, every sailor shipped as a passenger to the coast of Africa must very well know what he is going for; and, if he did not consent to the guilt of slave-trading when he set out, he must at least have consented to it when he saw, or aided in getting slaves aboard. Away, then, in such a matter, with these apologies for the immediate actors in an iniquity one of the most detestable that can be conceived, and fitter for fiends than men!

We object strongly again to the temper and effect of the following paragraphs:

"It will be seen, from the examinations which have recently taken place at Rio, that the subjects of her Britannic Majesty, as well as our own citizens, are deeply implicated in this inhuman traffic. British factors and agents, while they supply Africa with British fabrics in exchange for slaves, are chiefly instrumental in the abuse of the American flag; and the suggestions contained in the letter of Mr. Wise, (whose

judicious and zealous efforts in the matter cannot be too highly commended,) addressed to Mr. Hamilton, the British Envoy, as to the best mode of suppressing the evil, deserve your most deliberate consideration—as they will receive, I doubt not, that of the British Government.

"It is also worthy of consideration, whether any other measures than those now existing are necessary to give greater efficacy to the just and humane policy of our laws, which already provide for the restoration to Africa of slaves captured at sea by American cruisers. From time to time, provision has been made by this Government for their comfortable support and maintenance, during a limited period after their restoration; and it is much to be regretted that this liberal policy has not been adopted by Great Britain. As it is, it seems to me that the policy it has adopted is calculated rather to perpetuate than to suppress the trade, by enlisting very large interests in its favor. Merchants and capitalists furnish the means of carrying it on; manufacturers, for which the negroes are exchanged, are the products of her workshops; the slaves, when captured, instead of being returned back to their homes, are transferred to her colonial possessions in the West Indies, and made the means of swelling the amount of their products, by a system of apprenticeship for a term of years; and the officers and crews who capture the vessels receive, on the whole number of slaves, so many pounds sterling per capita, by way of bounty.

"It must be obvious that, while these large interests are enlisted in favor of its continuance, it will be difficult, if not impossible, to suppress the nefarious traffic; and that its results would be, in effect, but a continuance of the slave-trade in another and more cruel form; for it can be but a matter of little difference to the African whether he is torn from his country and transported to the West Indies as a slave, in the regular course of the trade, or captured by a cruiser, transferred to the same place, and made to perform the same labor under the name of an apprentice, which is at present the practical operation of the policy adopted.

"It is to be hoped that her Britannic Majesty's Government will, upon a review of all the circumstances stated in these despatches, adopt more efficient measures for the suppression of the trade which she has so long attempted to put down, with (as yet) so little success, and more consonant with the original policy of restoring the captured African to his home."

The fear of incurring denunciations for daring on this high matter to speak the words of mere soberness and truth, will not deter us from saying to the country what it ought to hear. The case is an infinitely solemn and high one, before which vanish in our own bosoms a great part of the merely local feelings. It is one of the few matters—if, indeed, there be any other at all—where it seems to us that men may allow themselves to feel and to act nationally, as citizens of the world; not even then, certainly, upon any crude and rash ideas of that sort of philanthropy which oftentimes assumes the name for purposes unsafe on all sides; but with a wise and a true beneficence, that is ready in a cause like this to make any temporary sacrifice that can be safely made to the removal of a human woe as pitiable as this.

Britain, against whom these reproaches are directed by the late President's Message, has, as every body knows, thus far captured nearly all the slaves that ever have been captured—probably at least ten times as many as both France and ourselves together have ever caught. We ourselves have never, we think, seized above five or six in all. This superior success she has attained in part by the much greater force that she has employed for the purpose, and the large annual expense at which this is done, but no doubt also in no small part through the very means which Mr. TYLER denounces—the bounty which she gives her sailors for every capture they make. To stimulate her ships to the service she pays for her pocket so much a head for every captured slave.

As to the subsequent disposal charged by the Ex-President to be so cruelly and wrongfully made of the captives, all these very hasty charges have been abundantly exploded in the statements made in Parliament by Sir ROBERT PEEL and others. These we gave a few days since, as received by the Great Western.

These inculpations of others are, however, made still more unwarrantable by the facts set forth in the documents themselves upon which Mr. TYLER founds them. It is true that in these charges he but copies the despatches of Mr. WISE; but those despatches repeatedly declare also that it is chiefly by means and under cover of our flag that this iniquitous traffic is now increasing. How, is easily seen. The United States claim for their flag an absolute and unconditional exemption from search. Well, they having in all only a few vessels of war along the wide extent of African coast, the slave-trade of course in comparative safety assumes our flag; which can, besides, be at once exchanged for another should one of our cruisers come upon them. But it further appears that at present the slave-dealers find it expedient to go further—to get real American vessels, and preserve for them the seeming proofs of their original character and nationality, even when these have in truth been lost by a sale or other mode of transfer. By these means they can pass unharmed through British cruisers, or be searched only at that hazard of an apparent violation of our flag which it is serious to run. The grounds taken, however, will be best explained by the following extract from Mr. WISE's despatch of the 11th October last:

"If I understand the position taken by our Government, it is that the flag of the United States shall be positive protection to their own vessels; and that, if any Power attempts to exercise the authority to search a vessel sailing under that flag it must be at its peril. That is to say, if the vessel belongs to the United States, and is under their flag, it is, under any circumstances, even when there are slaves stowed away on board, a case for reparation. If the vessel belongs not to the United States, or be under false colors, it is a case of which the United States will not take cognizance. The Earl of Aberdeen, as I understand, yields the point that where the vessel is found on visit (which means, practically, the act of search) to belong to the United States, even though she have slaves on board, the British Government or cruiser will not pretend to the right of interfering with her. The United States insist that they shall not search to find out whether the vessel is a vessel of the United States or not; and if they do, and the vessel does belong to their flag, whether slaves be found on board or not, they shall be held answerable."

These are Mr. WISE's views of our rights. A little further on may be seen his ideas of our policy, and of what should be and what really is that of England. He is speaking of a conference held by him with the British Minister to Brazil, Mr. HAMILTON:

"During my interview with him, I took occasion, in a becoming way, to endeavor to impress upon him the conviction

that the attempt on the part of Great Britain to subject our vessels to her acts of visit or search was, among other causes, an obstacle to the successful suppression of the African slave-trade. The United States never could so cordially and efficiently co-operate in the benevolent work of arresting that odious traffic so long as there was a pretence even of the right to search their vessels. The jealousy with which they would guard their rights of free navigation and commerce would naturally and inevitably, to some extent, cover and protect illicit trade. That if the British Government would waive all claim to this right of search of United States vessels, and would no longer pay bounties of so many pounds sterling per capita for every recaptured African to the officers of her cruisers, and thereby remove from them the temptation to encourage actually the shipping of the slaves on the coast of Africa, in order that they may win the reward of their capture on the high seas, (which they are accused of doing,) and if the British Government would cease itself to partake, in some sense, of the slave-trade, by carrying every captured slave into her colonies at Domaniara and other places, to bind them out for a limited period of servitude, instead of restoring them to some African colony, there to be taught the arts of civilized life in manual-labor or other schools, and thence to be dispersed throughout Africa for its improvement, the attempts to suppress the slave-trade would prove much more successful, and the roots of the evil would soon be reached in Africa herself, where they take their growth. I urged that moral means were much preferable to physical force, and referred him to the confirmation of these views in the lately expressed opinions of the Earl of Clarendon in the British Parliament. His only reply was, that his Government had changed its plan of operation, by withdrawing nearly all its force from the South American coast, and transferring it to the eastern and western shores of Africa, as explained lately by the Earl of Aberdeen in the House of Lords. This terminated our conversation, and I avoided adding (what I am sure of) that this transfer of force means nothing more, and will result in nothing less, than the destruction of all except British trade with Africa, and in a necessity for increased vigilance on the part of the United States for the protection of their vessels and crews in all the East. I submit whether, under our treaty with England, some inquiry should not be made which will elicit information as to her mode of enslaving captured Africans in her colonies. Is it not, in fact, a part of the slave-trade to take them away from their own country without their consent, to bind them out under a system of apprenticeship? Are proper steps taken to guard their identity and to prevent them from being enslaved for life? If they may be lawfully held in bondage for a term of five or ten years, why not for fifty or one hundred years, or any period beyond the duration of human life? It is openly avowed here from various quarters that many of these apprentices, after being bound out, are reported to be dead by their masters; their names are changed and flesh marks taken out, and they are transformed into slaves for life. Has England, under her treaties with and pledges to the world, a right to carry on a system like this, which leads to the direct encouragement of the trade she professes to suppress, and which, by fraud and cruelty, increases its horrors, inhumanities, and crimes? But this is for me merely to suggest."

We pass over, for the present, what follows, up to the 39th page of the document—the papers relating to the case of the "Cyrus," an American ship repeatedly visited, from her suspicious movements, at and off Cabinda, on the slave coast, by British cruisers, and at last abandoned by her Captain, upon an alleged outrage by the Commander of the British brig of war "Alert;" and the case of the "Sooy," chased on the coast of Brazil, just after she had landed a cargo of 580 slaves, and abandoned by her crew, without removing the plain proofs of what she was—an American-built vessel, using at pleasure either the American or Brazilian character and flag.

In his despatch of November 1, accompanying these papers and others communicated to him by Mr. J. H. Tyler, our Consul at Bahia, (Brazil), Mr. WISE holds to the Secretary of State the following language:

"These papers but too clearly show how the African slave-trade is carried on in Brazil, and how shamefully the United States flag is prostituted to its infamous uses. Our laws should be modified to meet this way of aiding and abetting the slave-trade by the sale of vessels here, to be transferred and delivered on the coast of Africa. Thus it is that our flag is made to protect a Brazilian vessel, with a crew and perfect outfit of slave-deck, water-casks, iron, &c. &c. to the African coast; and I venture to affirm that not a vessel of the United States is sold in Brazil, to be delivered at a port in Africa, without taking out a crew and such outfit for the slave-trade, and without the United States' captain and crew, if not owners and consignees, wilfully and knowingly aiding and abetting that traffic; and I affirm, further, that in all such cases the United States Consul has reason to know, and does know, to a moral certainty, that in every such case, without exception, there is more or less preparation for, and an intention to engage in, the slave-trade, if opportunity favors the attempt, when any such vessel clears from his office in Brazil. But the Consuls say to me, 'What can we do?' The owners or persons empowered have the right to sell and to deliver where they please. I have ventured to say to Mr. Gordon that there is a qualification to this right; and I beg to know whether, in case a Consul has good reason to believe, from the notoriety of the mode of carrying on this trade, and from his knowledge of the parties to the given transfer of vessel, that the flag of the United States is about to be abused to the purpose of an infamous offence against the laws of the United States, he may not refuse to clear the vessel? Ought not our Government to give immediately as strict and strong instructions, in a circular, to Consuls on this subject, as its nature requires, and as our laws of navigation and commerce will permit? What power have I to instruct and direct United States Consuls in the jurisdiction of Brazil? If American Ministers have no power of controlling them, there ought to be a Consul General of the United States allowed and appointed for this empire forthwith."

"Until instructed not to do so, I shall assume to call for information from, and to direct the action of Consuls; and, in one word, to take any lawful responsibility for the suppression of the slave-trade carried on by citizens of the United States under their flag. I therefore hesitated not to have sent to Mr. Consul Tyler, at Bahia, the letter a copy of which is enclosed. He is, I am told, a clerk or subordinate in the house of Mr. John S. Gilmer, who will see by the letter of Mr. Gordon to me, is said to have actually sold the ship Gloria for the slave-trade. At all events, you will see the names of the owners of the Sooy, in the State of New Jersey, and of her master and mate. The exposure of the names alone of our citizens engaged directly or indirectly in this traffic may go very far to arrest it. I beg to know of the Department whether my action in all these matters has been too strong; and, if it is not approved, I desire instructions for the future. If I felt fully empowered, and that I would be fully sustained in the prompt and decisive application of moral and physical means here, I would stake my reputation on the attempt to break up all participation in the slave-trade by United States vessels and citizens, root and branch, in one year from the commencement of operations—and that, too, without any undue restrictions upon, or obstructions to, our lawful commerce. Frigates are not the ships of war to cruise upon this station. Station one here, and one at the river Plate, to interchange frequently, and to visit Pernambuco and Bahia at irregular intervals; and near those places keep a regular force of two sloops-of-war and four frigates, at least, to run into shoal waters on the coast from Rio to St. Roque, and keep them, and as many more small vessels as possible, cruising from the Brazilian

to the African coasts, between the parallels of 7° or 8° north and 7° or 8° south of the equator. Instruct the Consuls to inform the captains and commanders of these vessels immediately in all cases of a sale of a United States vessel in Brazil, to be delivered in Africa or elsewhere; and instruct those captains and commanders to keep a lookout for these vessels when sailing, and to examine their outfit, if suspicious, while under the American flag. Cause the Consuls to inquire the names of owners and consignees, masters and mates, of such vessel so sold, and to have the same published in the United States and in Brazil; and appoint such Consuls only as are men of high and firm character, and pay them well enough to enable them to live without engaging in any trade or traffic, or having any business connexions in this country. I beg that the whole subject may be brought before Congress; and I refer to Mr. Slacum's correspondence, already published, for further information; and, though I don't agree with the mode suggested by him, of not allowing our vessels to trade from South America to Africa, yet, from his representations, the nature of the evils may be seen, and the remedy for them may be judged of."

It will be seen, from the above, that our Envoy is disposed to act his part in the suppression of the slave-trade, not only with vigor, but, as we have already said, with something of that vehemence which is characteristic of him.

Then follow, up to page 61, a variety of papers as to the "Sooy" (or Fortuna) already mentioned. They establish very clearly her history and owners as a slave. Two extracts of letters—the first from the British Commodore PURVIS, at Rio de Janeiro, October 7, and the second from our Consul at Bahia—may show what the general management of these evasions is:

"EXTRACT FROM COMM. PURVIS'S LETTER. 'The peculiar circumstances under which she is found on the coast of Brazil render it incumbent on me to expose one of the various artifices practised by slave-dealers. The "Sooy," is of American build, has on her stem the "eagle" carved, and painted in large letters "Sooy, of Newport." This vessel, it is well known, sailed from the port of Bahia under the American flag, with an American crew on board, for a port on the coast of Africa, with an understanding that when the slaves were actually on board, the master and crew should leave her; which they did, and she was surrendered to the captain and crew of a slave-dealer there, who landed on the coast of Brazil 625 slaves. She was met with by the "Racer's" boat, not far from the rock where the crew had deserted her, having struck on the shoal and drifted off. Papers which have been placed before me implicate an Englishman and a French house in Bahia; and I cannot but believe the Americans who sailed from Bahia in her equally culpable; so, in this instance, it developed the impropriety of conduct of natives of all three countries so strenuously opposed to the inhuman traffic, and whose respective Governments are using, in accordance with the true faith upon which treaties are based, all the means to repress it in their power."

"CONSULATE OF THE UNITED STATES, BAHIA, OCTOBER 13, 1844.

"SIR: I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th September, which was received on the 1st October. In reply, I have to state that the brig "Sooy," of Newport, New Jersey, Mark H. Leeds master, arrived here from Lisbon on the 25th day of April, 1843, for the first time, and sailed again on the 3d day of July, with a cargo, for the coast of Africa; after landing which, she returned to this port on the 1st of November, and remained here until the 26th day of April last, when she again cleared and sailed (the last time with a cargo) for Onim, on the coast of Africa, where she had arrived and discharged her cargo. She cleared from this as an American vessel. Her crew consisted of six Americans and three foreigners, besides the master, who is a native of Newport, New Jersey. Her consignees, when last here, were Messrs. Gantois and Paillet, Frenchmen, and who loaded her both voyages to the coast of Africa. She was owned by Nicholas Sooy, of Burlington County, and N. S. Thompson, of Atlantic County, State of New Jersey, as appeared by the register. I have no knowledge of any connexion or interest which a Captain William J. Tyler may have had with said vessel."

"I am not aware that she was sold at this place, but much suspect she was—or at least that some arrangement was made for selling her on the coast of Africa. She arrived on this coast some time in the month of August, under the command of a Brazilian; manned partly by Brazilians, and five of the former crew, among whom were two Americans. The master, (Mark H. Leeds), the mate, and remainder of the crew, I am informed, are on board the American brig Albert, now on the coast of Africa, and expected here soon. She brought from Onim, and landed on the coast, about six hundred slaves, and was on her way into the port, when an armed shore from the British cruiser chased her, and she was run on shore and abandoned. Two of the men of the crew she took from her, who came back in her, state that the crew was paid off at Onim, and they were persuaded by the master to come in her, and told, if they did not, they would be left on shore. I am awaiting the return of the master to inquire into this."

"I feel quite confident that the vessel has been sold, and was delivered over on the coast of Africa. Indeed, I have been told, by a party here, that papers are now getting ready to send on to Rio de Janeiro to claim her. She is doubtless owned, now, in this city, by foreigners; but whether the master has not made himself liable for aiding and abetting the slave-trade, in the manner of selling her, is a question that I am endeavoring to find out; and I will thank you to let me know it, in the course of the investigation which may be made, any thing tending either to exculpate or criminate him should appear."

"I am, sir, most respectfully and truly, your obedient servant, ALEXANDER H. TYLER, Consul."

"GEORGE W. GORDON, Esq."

"Consul of United States of America, Rio de Janeiro."

This answer of one of our Consuls to the inquiries of another appears by no means to satisfy Mr. WISE. He sends back, on the 25th of October, a much minuter series of interrogatories about the "Sooy," and what she and her people have been doing in the long intervals of the voyages that the Bahian Consul mentions. His letter closes as follows:

"Such are some of the many interrogatories I would propose to Mr. Tyler. I have not the honor of his acquaintance, but am sure that, if he is a good man and a faithful officer, he will readily account for my scrutiny into his official conduct respecting this case, and that he will appreciate the candid motive of affording him the opportunity of doing his duty so promptly and efficiently as to free himself from the suspicion which attaches not only to him, but to other United States officers in Brazil—especially on the part of the British authorities here—of a disposition to be at least blind to, if not to wink at, the infamous slave-trade. Suspicious like these do not affect me; but it is too true and notorious that the United States vessels and flag are used and abused—prostituted, I ought to say—to this odious traffic; and it is my duty and purpose to exert every means in my power, and to stimulate by every mode, all the consuls and agents of the United States in Brazil to aid in the effort to arrest and punish participation in its crimes by citizens of the United States, and to wipe out the foul stain from our country's flag of being its chief protection and safe-conduct. In the code of morals, if not of penal laws, every owner, agent, master, mate, merchant, consignee, or consul, or other officer or citizen of the United States, who sails, consigns, sells, or empowers to transfer a vessel and cargo, known to such person to be destined for the

slave-trade, and who fits or clears such vessel knowingly, or with conviction of such destination, is a culprit—a pirate in the forum of conscience—is a *particeps criminis* in the foul act of degrading and endangering the flag and of staining the honor of his country, and is himself unworthy of any thing but the severest penalties of our laws. I know—for I have from the very best sources full information of the character of the persons and place of Bahia, in respect to the slave-trade—what sort of difficulties Mr. Tyler may have to deal with in doing his duty in this behalf there. But the very reasons of these difficulties (to wit, that almost every man of capital in and about Bahia is engaged directly or indirectly in this traffic, and that its operations are scarcely hid from the light of day, and that no one dares there openly to oppose or expose its enormities) are the very reasons why he should have every opportunity of finding out and knowing the facts and persons of every case which may occur there. The abuse of the United States flag in this traffic exposes it daily to insult on the high seas, and on the coast of Africa, from the claim of English cruisers to visit and search our vessels; and the peace of the United States is constantly endangered thereby. In addition to its unlawfulness and inhumanity, then, the freedom of our navigation and the peace of our country require that United States officers should exert all their vigilance to prevent and punish every attempt to abuse our flag to the purposes of the slave-trade, and thus to remove the only pretext which any Power can have to insult and violate the sanctity of its protection, which the United States must and will insist upon at all hazards, to every ship and every seaman which sails under its folds."

Then follows a despatch from Mr. WISE to Mr. CALHOUN, dated 14th December, 1844, in which he speaks as follows of the general facts arrived at by the examination in a particular case, where he has caused a seizure to be made:

"The accompanying papers—No. 1, an unofficial letter addressed by me to Mr. Hamilton, at his request; No. 2, a letter from the American firm of Maxwell, Wright & Co., in Rio de Janeiro, to me; and No. 3, my reply to the same—will show the nature, connexions, and extent of the African slave-trade as it is, and has for some time been, unblushingly carried on by our citizens under our flag. It has grown so bold and so had as no longer to wear a mask even to those who reside here, and who are at all acquainted with the trade between Brazil and Africa. Upon information showing more than probable grounds, I hesitated not to advise our Consul, Mr. Gordon, to cause the arrest of the master, mate, and crew of the brig Montevideo, and to hold them in custody on board of the Boston sloop-of-war until he could examine into the case. The examination has proceeded to a great length, and I have given to it my personal attention and attendance; and, I must say, it has developed a combination of persons and of means to carry on this infamous traffic, to the utter disgrace of human nature, and to the dishonor of our flag and of all three nations—England, Brazil, and the United States."

Mr. WISE then speaks with praise of the conduct of our present Consul there, Mr. GEO. W. GORDON; who, he says, has acted zealously and efficiently with him—so that he desires that, if (Mr. G. incurs any blame for these arrests, &c., he (Mr. W.) may share it with him. He adds:

"Any disapprobation of Mr. Gordon's course would now be regarded here, as was the removal of Mr. Slacum from office, as nothing less than a sanction of the courses pursued by persons in Brazil to aid and abet the slave-trade. At all hazards, I shall continue in the steps I have taken until permanently ordered to desist. There has not been the least objection to my course on the part of this Government, and the police lent Mr. Gordon its prompt aid in the arrests."

Next comes, under date of December 1, a letter from Mr. WISE to the British Minister there, giving the history of the several cases and of the general facts brought to light in the examinations which he has lately been conducting. This statement is so important and interesting that we must present the narrative part of it at large, and by this means not only put the country in possession of a minute knowledge of these practices, but turn its eyes upon the persons who are engaged in them, more or less directly:

"Six. My whole time has been occupied lately in attending to the examination held before our Consul, in the cases of several persons charged with the violation of the laws of the United States for the suppression of the African slave-trade. You know how information, in part, was obtained upon which to institute proceedings. The examination has been as successful in the development of three cases, at least, as to trace the entire connexions of the slave-trade, and to show that, whilst the vessels and the flag of the United States are employed for transportation, British brokers are the immediate agents of the slave-dealers in Brazil, in negotiating the charters and sales of these vessels, and British goods chiefly are sent and consigned to make funds for the slave-trade on the coast of Africa, and British capital and credit are used here to guaranty the payments. Of these facts, now verified under oath, in the examination going on before the United States Consul, I requested Mr. Walsh, the Secretary of this Legation, to inform you, being too busily engaged myself to see you in person or to address you in writing. By a note of Friday last, Mr. Walsh says: 'I saw Mr. Hamilton yesterday, &c. He appears well disposed to act in the matter, and says he will be glad to receive a note from you, communicating all the details which you may possess. Neither he nor Mr. Hesketh had heard of the case of the Agnes, &c.'"

"Acting on this message, I proceed to state, as briefly as I can, the general history of these cases, which may serve to illustrate the leading features of the foreign slave-trade, and the perfect affiliation of means between citizens of England, the United States, and Brazil, by which it is carried on. I shall not be precise as to dates, because I have not the depositions before me, and they are numerous and very voluminous."

"The Agnes, a United States merchant vessel, employed in the lawful and regular trade between Rio de Janeiro and Philadelphia, arrived here on the day of —. She brought letters from her owners in Philadelphia to her American consignees here, instructing them to procure, if possible, an advantageous charter-party for the vessel. The consignees, as is usual in Rio, employed an English broker by the name of Wetman, of the English firm of Hobbs & Wetman, to negotiate this charter-party for her. Wetman negotiated it with Manoel Pinto Fonseca, a person whose only known business is that of the foreign African slave-trade, and whose character for slave-dealing is as notorious as any other universally known fact in Rio de Janeiro. It was to commence either here or in Philadelphia—I think at the latter port. The Agnes was to return to the United States, ship a cargo for Liverpool, take in a cargo of English goods there, and thence to sail, via Rio de Janeiro, for the coast of Africa. She did return to the United States, took in there a cargo (either for the owners or charterer, or in part for both) of land, &c. and cleared on or about the 30th of October, 1843, for Liverpool; chartered by the month, at so much per month, until she should arrive on the coast of Africa, and there the charter-party was to determine, or not, as might be agreed upon by the parties. The English broker here was paid a commission for negotiating the charter-party, and the American consignees here were paid commissions for guarantying the stipulated monthly payments, and for remitting them to the United States. On or about the 5th day of December, 1843, she arrived in Liverpool, consigned to persons as yet unknown to me, and there took in a cargo consisting of sundry dry goods, of powder, muskets, and bar hoop iron, and other articles known in the English market, and here particularly, as 'coast goods.' The papers found on board the "Sooy" will show you an exact description, by an Englishman, of the goods suitable for

the slave-trade. On or about the 3d day of January, 1844, she cleared from Liverpool with this cargo for Rio de Janeiro, consigned to American merchants; entered in Francis; discharged no cargo whatever; took orders from the charterer, remained here only two or three days; cleared, I think, for Montevideo, and sailed direct for Cabinda in Africa; consigned to a certain Cunha, a known agent of Fonseca in the African slave-trade. There she discharged a portion of every species of her cargo, and with the balance sailed to the river Congo, where she discharged all her cargo which she shipped in Liverpool. She was, in all, about six months on the coast of Africa, and during that time made one other trip from Cabinda to Congo and back. During this time the brig Montevideo arrived, in the latter part of 1843, at Rio de Janeiro, consigned to an American house, other than that to which the Agnes was consigned, with like instructions to charter her for the coast of Africa, or to sell her, deliverable on that coast. These consignees also applied to the same English broker, Wetman, and he negotiated a charter-party with the same Manoel Pinto Fonseca. It stipulated that the Montevideo should take in a lawful cargo here, for the coast, at \$900 per month, with privilege of examining and rejecting all objectionable bales or boxes, and binding the vessel to take certain passengers at the cost of the charter. On the 11th of February, 1844, she sailed from this port with a cargo sorted for the coast, and with certain Brazilian or Portuguese passengers on board, direct for Cabinda; delivered her cargo to Cunha; and about June or July, 1844, she returned, still under American colors, to Victoria—perhaps in ballast. There, about the first part of August, 1844, she was fitted for the coast, with most of the appliances of the slave-trade, under the superintendence of a man named Sonto, who has heretofore been acting at that port as Vice Consul of the United States, and whose appointment has, on my application, been since revoked, on the ground of being also a notorious slave-trader. There, also, she took on board, as passengers, a master and crew of Portuguese and Brazilian seamen; and there, for the present, we will leave her, to return to the Agnes, and to recur to other events transpiring."

"The master of the Agnes (a man of some such name as Eugene Gode) had, in this time, died on the coast, leaving her in command of her mate. Late in the spring, or early in the summer of 1844, another brig of the United States, the "Sea Eagle," arrived here, and was chartered in the same manner as the Montevideo, through Wetman, for the coast of Africa, to take a lawful cargo at \$900 per month, and to take passengers, &c. The charter party was with Fonseca also, and was, like them all—stereotyped, as it were—as the goods, wares, and merchandise are manufactured 'fit for the coast.' And she too was consigned to this same Cunha, the agent of Fonseca at Cabinda. She took out hence, as passengers, a Brazilian or Portuguese master and crew; and also took out as passenger a certain Captain Gray, a citizen of the United States, the owner, or agent of the owners of the Agnes, and who came master in her from Philadelphia to this port. This Gray had here, through Wetman, sold the Agnes to Fonseca, deliverable on the coast of Africa, at \$9,000; Wetman receiving, as usual, a commission for the negotiation, and he or her consignees receiving commissions for the guaranty also of the bills drawn by Fonseca or her agent in Africa, payable in Rio de Janeiro, for the amount of the purchase money. When the Sea Eagle arrived at Cabinda, she found the Agnes in the harbor."

"Agnes, in case he could get \$9,000; and Fonseca had advised his agent, Cunha, to bargain for her at that price, as before described. The sale, in fact, was made here by Gray, before he left, the vessel being on the coast of Africa and deliverable there; but the appearance was kept up of selling her there. As soon as the sale and delivery were effected, (and probably before), the Brazilian passengers who were taken out in the Sea Eagle, in company with Gray, were transferred to the Agnes; water was shipped in the usual pipes, stowed two tiers deep, fore and aft, and the upper tier being 'checked even' with barrels of wood; rush mats were spread over the pipes, and the negro slaves were berthed on these mats, without any regular slave deck. The American flag hauled down, and papers taken off, and name erased or painted over, she sailed on or about the 7th of September, 1844, with about 500 slaves, and landed them on the coast of Brazil, near Cape Frio. It is said Captain Gray and the American crew were transferred to the Sea Eagle, which vessel remained at Cabinda until after the arrival of the brig Montevideo."

"Whilst these events were transpiring at Cabinda, the brig Montevideo, having fitted at Victoria, taken in water-pipes, lumber for a slave deck, and a master and crew of Brazilian passengers, was sailing on her second voyage for Africa, and arrived at Cabinda after the Agnes had sailed with her cargo of slaves. She delivered a part of her cargo at Cabinda; she had, in fact, already been sold, through Wetman, to Fonseca, in Rio, in the usual way, for \$9,000, deliverable on the coast of Africa; and \$4,000 of that sum had been advanced, either by Wetman or her American consignees here, as security, and the one or the other took the bills of Fonseca payable in Rio for \$9,000; Wetman receiving commission on the negotiation. She was consigned also to Cunha, to whom she was delivered up; the Brazilian master and crew whom she took out from Victoria were left in charge of her. The United States flag and papers, and her name, were taken off; her American master and crew were transferred to the Sea Eagle, which carried out the Brazilian crew for the Agnes, and brought back the United States masters and crews for both the Montevideo and Agnes. The Montevideo shipped 800 slaves at Cabinda, and landed them, it is said, at Cape Frio. The Sea Eagle was ordered by Cunha to Victoria, with the intention to discharge the crews of the Agnes and Montevideo there; but the acting Vice Consul, Sonto, having been stripped of his commission in the mean time, the Sea Eagle, with all her passengers, was compelled to sail for Rio to discharge them here. Here the United States Consul arrested Pendleton and his crew; and the master and crew of the Sea Eagle and two of the men of the Agnes have been examined, and will be sent home as witnesses. And the examination shall proceed until all the testimony to be obtained in Rio de Janeiro shall be recorded. For the facts detailed, I speak on the authority of the depositions already taken and to be taken."

Then comes the following—equally worthy of attention, except in what seems to us a very hasty as well as as invidious imputation against the English cruisers; for Mr. WISE himself afterwards distinctly contradicts the charge, in the words of Mr. SLACUM:—"The cargo, be it what it may, (except slaves, as I understand,) affords no just ground of capture;" a sentence that clears up the whole accusation in the third paragraph of the next extract:

"Aside from these depositions, I have obtained much information, which it is proper you should know."

"The goods and credit of British manufacturers and merchants are liberally and indulgently extended to the Portuguese and Brazilian merchants in Brazil, on long time. The Portuguese and Brazilian merchants ship then in these vessels, chartered by the slave-traders for the coast; and, in many cases, a single vessel will take out the shipments of some ten or twenty various persons. They are not always loaded by the slave-dealers themselves. Those persons who purchase of the British merchants the 'goods fit for the coast,' are mostly small dealers; and the chief security which the British merchants have for payment is the successful sales of these goods in Africa. If they are captured or destroyed, the British merchants suffer. The consequence, it is said, is, that the English cruisers will not now capture or destroy them, because the blow is found to fall upon the trade and commerce of their own countrymen."

"Again: It is asserted here positively, as I have informed you on another occasion, that the British cruisers do not take the proper and active steps to prevent the shipping of slaves in Africa; and the alleged motive is, that they seem to desire